



National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

Grand Canyon National Park

PO Box 129  
Grand Canyon, AZ 86023

928 638-7944 phone  
928 638-7935 fax  
[www.nps.gov/grca](http://www.nps.gov/grca)

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## Grand Canyon News Release

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Contact(s): Kirstin Heins

Phone number: 928-638-7944

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### **PRESCRIBED FIRES PLANNED FOR GRAND CANYON NATIONAL PARK THIS SPRING**

**Grand Canyon, AZ** – Recent precipitation may provide suitable conditions in Grand Canyon National Park to conduct prescribed burns this spring. If environmental factors such as wind, temperature and relative humidity are favorable, carefully planned prescribed fires will be ignited to meet specific resource objectives.

Although planning begins several years in advance of any prescribed fire, the decision to initiate any prescribed burn will be made by park managers within days of the proposed burn. Appropriate planning and compliance has been completed on the following prescribed fires which would be carried out this spring if conditions warrant:

- Long Jim II – 1,656 acres. The Long Jim burn unit is located approximately two miles southwest of the South Rim village area. This will be the first treatment of this unit with prescribed fire, known as a first entry burn. The primary fuel types are ponderosa pine and pinyon-juniper.
- Shoshone - 1,031 acres. The Shoshone burn unit is located approximately three miles east of the South Rim village area, immediately south of Yaki Point. This will be a second entry burn; the area was previously treated with prescribed fire in 1999. The second entry burn is conducted in an effort to mimic the natural fire cycle. The primary fuel types are ponderosa pine and pinyon-juniper.
- Bright Angel – up to 100 acres. The Bright Angel prescribed fire will be implemented in small blocks throughout the North Rim developed area. The primary fuel type is ponderosa pine.
- Northwest – 2,800 acres. The Northwest burn unit is located approximately twelve miles northwest of the North Rim developed area. It will be a combination of first and second entry burns. The fuel types are ponderosa pine and mixed conifer.

Prescribed fires are one of the most effective tools available to resource managers for restoring fire dependant ecosystems. These fires mimic natural fires by reducing forest fuels, recycling nutrients and increasing habitat diversity. All prescribed fires are managed with firefighter and public safety as the first priority.

Thorough planning is used to minimize smoke impacts; however, it is impossible to predict weather patterns and smoke behavior with complete accuracy. Smoke impacts may be possible in the adjacent communities and along the river at night and in the early morning hours, since smoke settles when the air temperature cools and dissipates during daylight hours.

Grand Canyon National Park has an active and successful prescribed fire program. In 2005, Grand Canyon's fire program conducted 8,906 acres in prescribed burns. Grand Canyon National Park received the Intermountain Region's Paul Gleason Memorial Keeper of the Flame Award for excellence in accomplishments for prescribed fire and wildland fire use for both the 2003 and 2005 seasons.

Anyone interested in learning more about the Grand Canyon National Park's prescribed fire plans is welcome to participate in an open house meeting hosted by the National Park Service in the Community Building on the South Rim of Grand Canyon, **Wednesday, April 19 from 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm**. Grand Canyon Fire Management and Emergency Services staff will be available to provide additional information and answer questions anytime during the two-hour open house meeting.

For additional fire information, please call 928-638-7819. You may also visit Grand Canyon's web site at <http://www.nps.gov/grca/>

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